

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2010

Administrator Rajiv Shah
United States Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523

Dear Administrator Shah:

Congratulations on your appointment as Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

As you know, yesterday afternoon Haiti was struck by a powerful earthquake, the largest that has been seen on the island in 200 years. This tragedy has brought massive loss of life, and countless injuries to the people of Haiti. New Yorkers have a very special connection with the people of Haiti, as the families of some 125,000 New York families hail from that country, and thousands more travel regularly between Haiti and New York. Our hearts and prayers are with all those who have lost loved ones or are searching for family members and friends.

We commend the quick dispatch of a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to Haiti. However, given the magnitude of this tragedy, more needs to be done, and we are writing to urge you to include New York City first responders in the search and rescue effort in Haiti. We understand that teams from Fairfax County, VA, Los Angeles County, CA, and Miami-Dade County, FL, have already been deployed to Haiti to provide search and rescue assistance. We appreciate the bravery and good work of these forces, and New Yorkers would like to assist these men and women in any way possible.

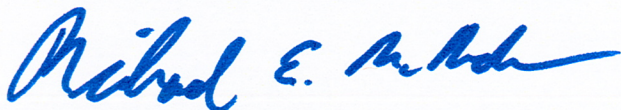
We believe that such a large-scale effort in the western hemisphere's poorest nation would greatly benefit from search and rescue professionals who have an intricate knowledge of Haiti. As you may know, New York Police Commissioner, Raymond Kelly served from 1994-1995 as Director of the International Police Monitors in Haiti, a U.S. led force responsible for ending human rights abuses and establishing an interim police force there. In fact, Commissioner Kelly was in Haiti just last Thursday for a ribbon cutting ceremony at a new police precinct in Port-Au-Prince. Commissioner Kelly's close ties with the local Haitian police force will be an undeniable asset to the Haitian people.

New York's first responders and search and rescue teams are some of the most well trained and skilled teams in the world. The New York Police Department (NYPD) and Fire Department of New York (FDNY) stand ready to deploy, but the City of New York has no independent authority to work outside of the federal rotation schedule for deploying local emergency responders. The NYPD and the FDNY need your approval to be activated through the Urban

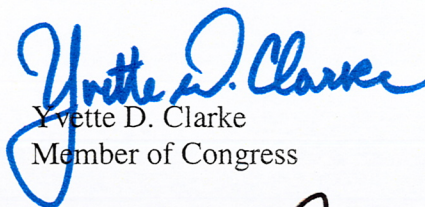
Search & Rescue (US&R) program run by USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance. We urge you to grant this approval so that New York's finest and New York's bravest can help the people of Haiti save countless lives and assist in the search and rescue effort in Haiti.

We appreciate your efforts to send assistance and support in Haiti and your consideration of this matter. If you have any further inquiries, please contact Naz Durakoglu in Congressman McMahon's office at Naz.Durakoglu@mail.house.gov or Algene Sajery in Congresswoman Clarke's Office at algene.sajery@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



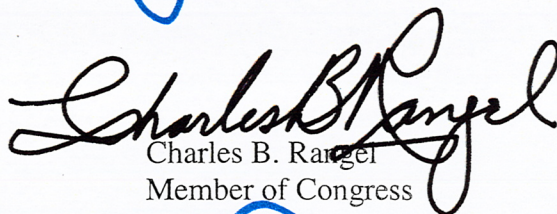
Michael E. McMahon
Member of Congress



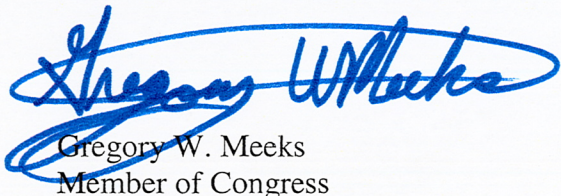
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



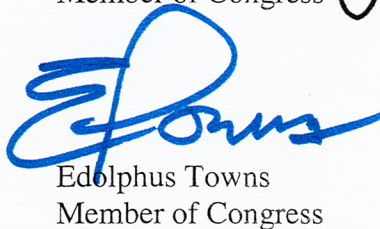
Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



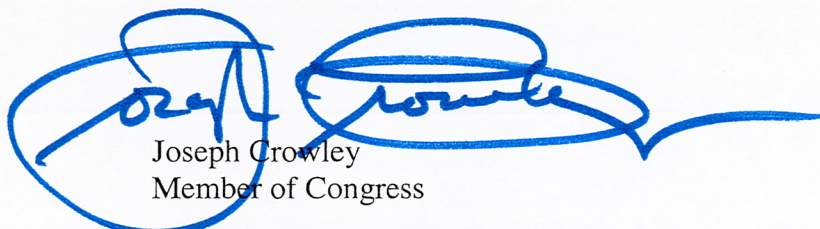
Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress



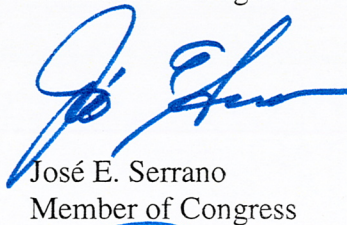
Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



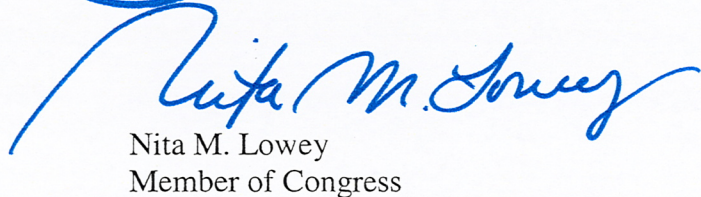
Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress



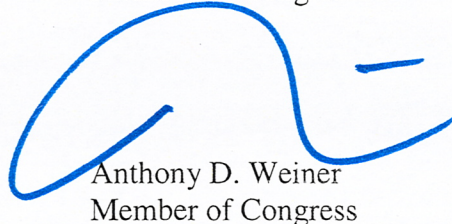
Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



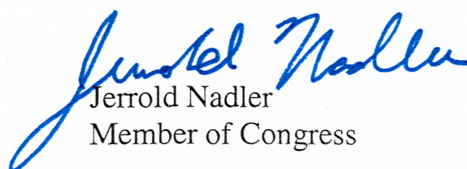
Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress



Anthony D. Weiner
Member of Congress



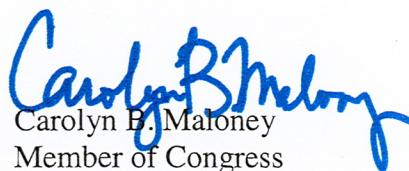
Gary L. Ackerman
Member of Congress



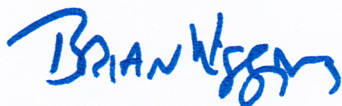
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Steve Israel
Member of Congress



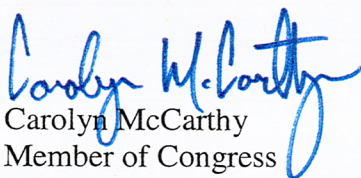
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



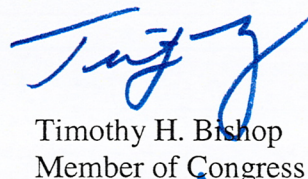
Brian M. Higgins
Member of Congress



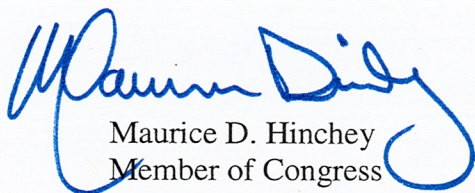
John J. Hall
Member of Congress



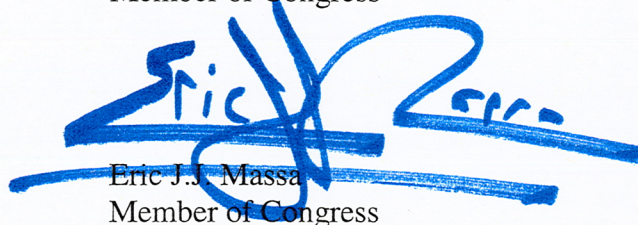
Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress



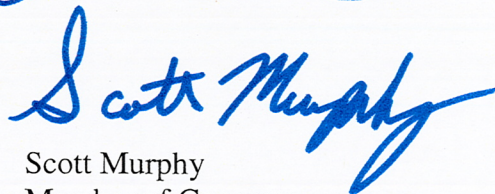
Timothy H. Bishop
Member of Congress



Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress



Eric J. Massa
Member of Congress



Scott Murphy
Member of Congress